

**Subject: Consideration of the City of Alexandria's Request for Funding in the Commonwealth's FY 2010 – 2015 Six-Year Improvement Program**

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**ISSUE**

Recommendation to City Council of priorities for programming urban system funds expected to be allocated to Alexandria in the Commonwealth Transportation Board FY2010 – 2015 Six-Year Improvement Program.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Transportation Commission endorse and recommend to City Council the programming of the urban system funds that are allocated to Alexandria in the FY 2010 – 2015 Six-Year Improvement Program as proposed in this memorandum.

**BACKGROUND**

Each year, the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) adopts an updated Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP) for transportation. This program allocates projected state and federal funding for transportation projects that are proposed for study, development or construction during the next six fiscal years. The CTB is now preparing an updated SYIP for fiscal years 2010 through 2015 that will become effective on July 1, 2009.

During recent years, funding that is projected to be available through the SYIP and its urban system program has decreased significantly. In February 2008 based on a revised estimate of the amount of state and federal funding that would be available to support projects included in the SYIP, the Commonwealth's Secretary of Transportation announced a projected reduction in Six-Year Program revenues of approximately \$1.1 billion during fiscal years 2008 through 2014. This resulted in an approximate 44 percent reduction in urban system funding in the FY 2009 – 2014 SYIP. Alexandria's funding allocations in the FY 2009 program decreased from an average of \$5.8 million to \$3.2 million per year in the FY 2009 SYIP. Recently, the state announced that additional reductions in projected Six-Year Plan revenues could be expected to reduce urban system funding by an additional 40 to 45 percent. With this additional shortfall, Alexandria's expected funding allocations would decrease to about \$1.5 million per year.

In reaction to the most recently projected revenue reductions, the CTB has also taken the unusual action of reconsidering the current FY 2009 – 2014 SYIP. Although the impacts of these additional revenue shortfalls are not yet clear, it is estimated that the urban

system allocations in the FY 2009 – 2014 SYIP will be reduced by an additional 15 percent.

## **DISCUSSION**

The programming of Alexandria's funding allocations in the FY 2009 – 2014 SYIP are shown in the attached SYIP funding table. Note that this funding is based on the SYIP adopted on July 1, 2008 and does not reflect any reductions that may result from the CTB's current reconsideration of the FY 2009 program. In summary, the FY 2009 SYIP programmed funding through FY 2014 for:

1. Widening of Eisenhower Avenue between Holland Lane and Stovall Street;
2. Purchase of replacement transit buses for Alexandria Transit Company (DASH);
3. Improvements to Edsall Road near Van Dorn Street; and
4. Replacing funding that was reprogrammed from phase 2 of the Clermont (Eisenhower) Avenue interchange project.

In light of the limited amount of funding that is expected in the FY 2010 – 2015 SYIP, staff recommends that the programming of these funds as established in the FY 2009 program be maintained with minor adjustments in out year funding for bus purchases and that first priority be given to the purchase of replacement buses needed to operate the DASH transit system and second priority be given to Edsall Road improvements. The recommended programming of Alexandria's annual funding allocation is shown in the attached SYIP funding table. Note that the total annual allocations in this table are based on the adopted FY 2009 program as the amounts of any additional reductions are not yet known.

Fortunately, the City has secured funding to complete two major roadway improvement projects with funds that have been previously allocated. These are the King-Beauregard intersection improvements and the widening of Eisenhower Avenue between Holland and Stovall. Through other funding sources, the City also has confirmed funding to complete over \$4 million of nonmotorized transportation improvements in the City and to construct needed improvements to Washington Street.

While other projects, such as reconstructing Madison and Montgomery Street from Fairfax Street to St. Asaph Street, were considered as possible recipients of urban system funds, the amount of money expected to be available in the FY 2010 program would not be sufficient to fund any of these projects. Staff recommends that they be considered as candidate projects for funding through other programs, such as the state revenue sharing program.

The City has been progressive in utilizing its urban system funding for all modes of travel. The new DASH maintenance facility that is currently being constructed is funded primarily with urban funds and the City has also allocated urban funds in past years for the purchase of both new and replacement buses for DASH. In order support the City's Strategic Plan goal of providing an integrated multi-modal transportation system that can effectively get people from point A to point B, it is necessary to maintain our bus fleet in

good repair. As such, when buses have reached the end of their useful operating life they must be replaced. With an operating life of 12 years and a fleet of approximately 60 vehicles, an average of five replacement buses are needed by DASH each year. Since there are no funds other than urban program funds currently available for this purpose, staff proposes that first priority for funding in the FY 2010 – 2015 SYIP be the purchase of needed replacement buses.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** This action will require that the City provide a 2% local match for the urban system funds it receives from the Commonwealth. For an average allocation of \$1.5 million, a \$30,000 local match will be required.

**Attachment:** Six-Year Improvement Program Funding

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